DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

NAVAL SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES
BETHESDA, MARYLAND 20889-5611

NSHS BETHESDA INSTRUCTION 5370.4

APR 4 1997

From: Commanding Officer

Subj: ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

Ref: (a) SECNAVINST 5370.2J (Standards of Conduct)

1. <u>Purpose</u>. To explain the command's policy on the correct use of electronic communications media.

2. <u>Background</u>. The proliferation of computers and facsimile machines has allowed communications to expand exponentially in the Navy. E-mail has taken over as a principle way people talk to each other on a regular basis. Access to information is now at everyone's desk top. The ease with which information can be exchanged and transmitted is truly amazing. Along with this comes the necessity for understanding the proper use of this new technology.

3. <u>Policy</u>. How we do business in the Navy is governed by reference (a), the Standards of Conduct. This policy tasks members of the Navy to always act in a way that keeps each of us above suspicion. This applies to areas of communication.

   a. General policy. Naval School of Health Sciences (NSHS) resources (i.e. computer hardware, software, and telecommunications infrastructure) that facilitate the use of communications through the internet or intranet are to be used when work related and determined to be in the best interest of the Navy and NSHS. Access is to be appropriate in frequency, duration, and be related to assigned tasks. Examples for appropriate use of the internet are:

      (1) Obtain information to support DOD, DON, or NSHS missions.

      (2) Obtain information that enhances the professional skills of NSHS personnel.

      (3) Improve personal and professional knowledge and skills as part of a formal academic or development program approved by the command.

   b. These are some examples of unauthorized use:

      (1) Unprofessional communications such as profanity or derogatory remarks.

      (2) Games and "surfing the net" out of curiosity.

      (3) Downloading software for personal use, using personal software without approval.

      (4) Doing personal work such as taxes, letters to friends, and real estate business.

      (5) Chit chat on the internet or the telephone.

   c. There are special case uses of communications technology that are allowed.

(1) Navy people who are working on their education may receive permission to use their computer for assignments and research. Whether this is done after hours or during some part of the work day is up to the person's supervisor.

(2) Passing on information or news to colleagues, congratulating friends on promotions and awards, or sharing new ideas are all examples of acceptable use of communications vehicles.
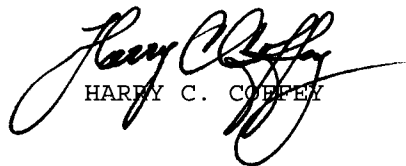
(3) E-mail with family members is governed with the same standards as the telephone. Accepting calls or e-mail for purely personal reasons is discouraged. Calls dealing with illness or other emergent situations are permitted. Initiating calls to check up on sick family members in the local area is likewise permissible.

    d. <u>Supervisors' responsibilities</u>

(1) Supervisors are to educate all of their personnel on the proper use of all technologies available in the command.

(2) Supervisors will monitor network usage and take appropriate action when abuse is suspected.

(3) Supervisors should keep current with the needs of the staff so that appropriate software is purchased to accomplish the mission. This will prevent programs from personal files and computer viruses from being introduced into the NSHS system.

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Distribution:
List I, II & III

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